

OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR- BRIAN SCHWEITZER
GOVERNOR'S ADVISORY COUNCIL
ON ECONOMIC SECURITY FOR MONTANA FAMILIES

State Capitol – Room 317
Helena, Montana
Tuesday, May 13, 2008
Wednesday, May 14, 2008

MINUTES-(Approved 7-21-08)

Council Members Present:

Minkie Medora, Chairperson
Representative Shannon Augare
Mary Danford
Everall Fox
Sheila Hogan
Bethany Letiecq
Barb Stiffarm
Elaine Topsy
Angie Wasia

Council Members Absent:

Lori Brengle
Robert Young

Council Designees and Attendees:

Guest Speakers: Mark Greenberg, Dr. George Haynes, Julia Worman

Dick Clark – Administration/CIO	Rep. Sue Dickenson
Joan Miles, Director-DPHHS	Rep. Franke Wilmer
Hank Hudson -DPHHS	Mary Berg
Jim Nolan-DPHHS	Dan Bernardt
Dore Schwinden-Labor & Industry	Kate Bradford
Dan Bucks, Director-Revenue	Ingrid Childress
Ed Caplis-Revenue	Candice Curriero
Jan Lombardi-Governor's Office	Marilyn Daumiller
Anne Pichette-Governor's Office	Thale Dillon
Anna Whiting Sorrell-Governor's Office	Colette Gray
Pat Wise- Governor's Office of Economic Development	Jasyn Harrington
	Chris Hettinger
	Linda Moodry
	Sue O'Connell
	Barb Perzinski
	Kim Reynolds
	Pat Steinwand

*Judy Garrity-Facilitator

Call to Order/Welcome

The meeting began with an introduction by Anna Whiting Sorrell. The meeting facilitator, Judy Garrity, facilitated on the 14th. (Attachment A-facilitator notes & charts)

The December 4th meeting minutes were approved.

Guest Presenters

Mark Greenberg-Center for American Progress: “The Overarching Issues of Family Economic Security” & “Where do states need to go from here on, lessons learned from other states, potential for partnerships to enhance state efforts.” Mark Greenberg’s presentation included a power point which will be made available and the publication “From Poverty to Prosperity”-April 2007 (Center for American Progress, 1333 H. Street, NW, 10th Floor, Washington, DC 20005).

Jan Lombardi-Governor’s Education Policy Advisor: Jan discussed the Governor and First Lady’s Math and Science Initiative, education for life, skilled workforce, early childhood-“best beginnings,” access to distance learning, closing the tuition and salary gap, training, higher education, and the quality educator loan forgiveness fund.

Dr. George Haynes and Julia Worman-Montana State University: Presented the preliminary data and information relating to the Poverty Report Card for Montana. The information is not final, as they are still working on specific data. (<http://www.montana.edu/extensionecon/poverty.html>)

Mark Greenberg and Dr. George Haynes discussed the implications of the poverty measure, equity issues, issues of population and age and how they affect preparations for the future.

Jim Nolan discussed the case before the Public Service Commission relating to the LIEAP customers and energy assistance program. It may be decided by summer.

Barb Stiffarm provided the Northwest Area Foundation report relating to Montana. (www.nwaf.org)

Department Directors:

Dick Clark discussed work being done to update infrastructure, e-government, network connectivity and oversight. Funds to update an old system are the cost of doing business to be able to provide services, protect privacy and have a secure system.

Director Dan Bucks-Revenue-discussed the fairness and equity in the tax structure, free electronic filing services, partnerships to provide preparations services, absence of a sales tax is good for low income individuals, credits for seniors along with other credits and property tax reductions to assist citizens.

Director Joan Miles-DPHHS-discussed coordinating with other directors on areas of commonality, workforce issues, transportation issues and the family economic security grants.

Deputy Commissioner Dore Schwinden-Labor & Industry-discussed the Jobs for MT Graduates program, apprenticeships, pre-apprenticeship training, working together and creating efficiencies and the shifting focus to market apprenticeships to employers to get people in the door.

Pat Wise-Office of Economic Development- discussed the work being done including business recruitment, short-term training, and 2-year schools.

Group Discussion

The Council's facilitated discussion is included as Attachment A and includes the three workgroup charts for the top three issues selected to focus on at this meeting (education, system, and employment/workforce).

Public Comment

Members of the public participated in the presentation discussions as well as the small group discussions.

Next Meeting

The next meeting was tentatively set for May in Helena but members were asked to provide schedules into the summer months. As soon as a location and date has been determined the council will be notified and the information posted on the statewide e-Calendar.

**GOVERNOR'S ADVISORY COUNCIL
ECONOMIC SECURITY FOR MONTANA FAMILIES
MEETING on May 14, 2008, 8:30—3:15
State Capitol-Room 317**

Priorities

The group used an accelerated process to determine priority items from a large pool of information. Ideas were gathered from each participant—then the ideas were grouped into various themes. Participants voted on the themes to establish priorities. Themes are listed below in priority order with ideas under each theme.

1. EMPLOYMENT / WORKFORCE (29 votes)

- Support EITC efforts in session (is something developing?)
- Good jobs
- Increased wages
- Higher wage and skill / apprenticeship
- Begin discussing paid leave
- Increase wages of current and future jobs
- Maintain high reaching goals to continue upward growth
- Business growth fueled by providing a skilled work force
- Growth of highly efficient alternative energy that serves as an anchor for economic growth
- Carbon footprint—new jobs, new energies, local farms, food
- Reach rural areas with mobile training
- Public transportation available to all
- Government conversation—barriers removed; public/private partnerships
- Coordinate all job training programs with employer needs for labor skills
- System to enhance employment prospects of groups cited—economic development efforts; apprenticeships; short-term training
- Employers' needs in the private sector—soft skills training
- Employees' needs for healthcare and child care facilities

2. SYSTEM (17 votes)

- Systems to educate: increase take up of programs; increase class consciousness
- Local barriers moved to the Council to be addressed
- Some strategies must go to Legislature or Congress with private sector
- Hit the road
- Coordinate with Governor's Office and cabinet
- Person-to-person engagement with economically insecure
- Look at programs that work and replicate
- Increase discussion of Latino immigrant growth and access to services
- Increase revenue collection from non-residents and non-compliant Montanans
- Leverage federal money so that everyone who needs help gets it
- Democrat in the White House
- Reduce stigma from applying for services
- Ways out of poverty; EITC; higher wages; financial literacy; asset building; tax credits; prepare for retirement
- Education and training programs

- Link with partner to build economy “outside” the boot including out-of-state resources with skill training
- More partnerships to make money go further
- State and non-profit coordination for services

3. EDUCATION (12 votes)

- Reduce the achievement gap for American Indian students
- Incentives for on-site daycare
- Increased child care access—tax credit
- Early childhood education
- Youth employment and training programs
- Early education and health programs
- Invest in kids and future
- Reduce drop out rate for American Indian students
- Reservation plan to increase high school/GED graduates
- Create “one stop shop” services for American Indians in Billings
- Develop advocacy skills for American Indian parents
- Innovations in education (K-16) and workforce partnerships
- Better understanding of Indians and families

4. FINANCIAL SYSTEM (10 votes)

- System to provide financial literacy: high schools; grade schools; captive audiences
- Continue to provide financial literacy and asset building
- System to encourage asset accumulation: IDAs; savings
- Predator lending practices eliminated
- Develop tools to address economic insecurity

5. TRIBAL (7 votes)

- Tribal TANF family resource center
- Tribal TANF for demonstration project opportunity
- Tribal TANF partner with state work force opportunities
- Tribal TANF access state information
- Increase coordination and outreach for all public programs to increase participation
- Bridge gaps and engage Native Americans in potential building of their skills and futures by offering more services in reservations
- Increase tribal enrollment into Medicaid programs

6. HEALTH ACCESS/CARE (6 votes)

- Insurance for everyone
- Dentists who will take Medicaid
- Accessible quality health care for all
- Healthy Kids—Montana initiative
- Medicaid
- CHIPS

7. MISCELLANEOUS (no votes)

- More food
- Housing—affordable, sustainability, availability